(c) The Central Government does not maintain State-wise data related to items of exports from various States.

(d) Ministry of Commerce has implemented a new scheme called "ASIDE" (Assistance to States for Development of Export Infrastructure and other activities) from 2001-2002, to assist States in development of export infrastructure. In addition to this, exporters from the States are eligible to access Market Development Assistance and Market Access Initiative for appropriate assistance.

Amendment of the Patent Act

4999. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association has demanded an amendment to the Patent Act to meet national emergencies; and

(b) if so, the measures taken to take advantage of the DOHA declaration of WTO to promote access to medicines to all at affordable prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) and (b) Some of the major Indian drug companies, through their associations, have made representations on various issues relating to proposed amendments in the Indian Patent Law including those relating to compulsory licensing in the light of the Doha Declaration on TRIPs and Public Health. The Patents Act, 1970 read with the Patents (Second Amendment) Bill, 1999 as reported by the Joint Committee of Parliament, contains adequate provisions for safeguarding national interest and public health including those relating to dealing with circumstances of national emergency and ensuring availability of medicines at affordable prices.

Demand of Indian cardamom

5000. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the demand for Indian cardamom in international market has increased in the recent past;

(b) if so, whether production of cardamom is keeping pace with its demand in the domestic and international market;

(c) if so, the production of cardamom during the last two years;

(d) whether the cardamom growers have been getting remunerative price for their produce; and

(e) if so, the incentives being provided to the farmers to increase its production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) There is a good demand for Indian cardamom in the international market and the production of cardamom is keeping pace with the demand in domestic and international market as is evident from the data on export and production of cardamom in the recent past:

Export of Cardamom		Production of Cardamom	
Years	Quantity(Tons)	Years	Quantity(Tons)
1998-1999	476	1999-2000	9330
1999-2000	646	2000-2001	10480
2000-2001	1100	2001-2002	11365*

*Preliminary Estimate. Source: Spices Board

(d) and (e) The cardamom growers have been getting remunerative price for their produce. Some of the incentives provided to the farmers to increase the production of cardamom include implementation of schemes like production and distribution of quality planting materials; re-planting of old senile and uneconomic plantations; irrigation; land development, etc.

DEPB rate on important petrochemicals

5001. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have stepped up the DEPB rate on important petrochemicals;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner it would be helpful in improving the condition of these industries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Since the Customs Duty applicable to the inputs covered by Standard Input Output Norms has a bearing on the calculation of the DEPB rate, the rate is revised at the beginning of each financial year when customs duties are changed in the General Budget. If necessary, mid-term revision is also undertaken based on specific representation of the industry supported by the concerned Export Promotion Council/ Association and Administrative Ministry concerned.